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GET READY FOR THE BOY SCOUT DRIVE

## THE PURSE FINDERS

By MICHAEL WHITE

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PRINGLE was searching the pavement of a crowded street. A few moments before he had taken a purse and a pinkie out of a pocket. In opening a stiff blade he slipped the purse to him.

"I guess it's no use hunting for it here," he decided finally. "Too bad! Hate to part from that old purse. Seem to have got the losing habit. Second thing within twenty-four hours."

So he thrust the knife back in his pocket, with the air of a man who brings reason to bear on a bit of ill-luck.

Meanwhile a girl of attractive presence had passed Pringle by and discovered the purse—a small, unpretentious, brown leather object. Just such a purse as a well-to-do man of past middle age with an attachment for things of long association might carry. She impulsively stooped for the purse, but it was snatched from under her well-fitting gloved hand. She lifted her eyes to encounter the fixed gaze of a very old woman. The contrast between the two was striking. In countenance, pose and manner, the girl emphasized the buoyancy, frankness and hope of youth; in the old woman's shriveled bent figure, wrinkled skin and hard, suspicious glance, lay a plain statement of vain dreams left far behind and a sole abiding comfort in money. To this, her rusty black garments and an antique bonnet perched sideways, added savings bank testimony; even as the girl's fresh, carefully thought-out attire bespoke a faithful response to the beguiling whisperings of Kismet. The girl was evidently surprised at the suddenness with which the purse had been whisked into another's possession, the old woman clearly exercising her wit on retaining it. She grasped the purse tightly in thin, rheumatic fingers, with lips moving absently as if from a habit of talking with herself. "It's not your purse—not yours," she snapped defiantly in a cracked voice.

This broke the slight spell in which the girl was held.

"Oh, no, of course not," she spontaneously replied. "I didn't think of claiming it. I am glad you recovered your purse before someone appropriated it."

She nodded, smiled pleasantly, and went on her way. The old woman stared after her with a curious expression of mingled cunning, greed and timidity, tucking the purse away in a fold of her skirt. Presently she was moved by a sudden impulse to creep swiftly into the wide portals of a department store. She plunged into the main aisle at an hour fairly thronged, to tread a devious way in and out, as if endeavoring to lose herself from a chance of the girl's hasty return after with a challenge. "Madam, I have discovered that that is not your purse," Her fingers were twined around it securely. To the resulting pressure it surely felt as if a tightwad of bills lay within. Her yearning to gaze upon them became a haunting obsession, but she was fearful of doing so before numerous seeing eyes. The rightful owner, might be at hand and recognize his property. After some hesitation, she determined on a definite course. She quickened her pace through the store until she came to an exit into a rear street. Here passenger traffic was infrequent, and no one likely to observe her actions. With trembling, nervous fingers, she unhooked the clasp of the purse. As she brought it within close range of vision, her expression was intense in its eager anticipation. For a moment she peered around the interior with a crooked finger. Then, feeling upon her a look of disappointment, so keen that it was almost painful. Never were disgust and chagrin written plainer on a human face. She gave vent to an imprecation, flung the purse downward, and set her foot upon it. This action served to again close the flap. Then she sped onward, with features grimly set, muttering to herself.

But, loathing up against a wall, a street loafer had casually watched the old woman. Since her back was to him he had merely seen the purse fall. For all he knew, she might have been counting over a week's hard earnings. This, however, in no wise entered into his ethics. He swooped down on the purse, grabbed it, and strode jauntily in the opposite direction. The purse certainly felt good to him. Thus he came to where a building in the block presented a long, dark hallway. He chuckled as he wrenched open the purse and dropped his gaze within. But only for a second. Then he swung abruptly.

He craned the purse in his hat. With a wide sweep of his arm he tossed it contemptuously from him as he regained the street.

Meanwhile, the purse hit a cart wheel, bounced here and there, and finally landed at the base of a water hydrant. Now beside the hydrant stood a policeman, and the purse found a resting place close to the heels of Officer 7301. The policeman was absorbed in directing a team serving mail, as he failed to notice the advent of the purse. A wayfarer was more absorbed in his own thoughts, but he impulsively drew back when the policeman's eye fell on him.

For a space he appeared undecided. Evidently a desire to secure the purse rose above the strictly moral code, since, to be sure, finding a purse is not precisely stealing. But it required more than ordinary temerity to snatch a purse from the heels of a policeman and make off with it. Yet he coveted that purse. So he retired to a strategic position under the awning of a grocery and, with gaze fixed on the purse, devoutly wished Officer 7301 would move on. The situation was distressing. In five minutes the wayfarer was due in an office where a promising job was offered, yet there was the fat little purse for anyone's gathering. But alas there, also, was Officer 7301, six feet tall and forty-two chest measurement, unconsciously guarding it. He waited, cordially anathematizing Officer 7301.

Presently, around the block came Pringle. He had stopped to chat with a friend on the side street. He thus arrived at the hydrant. He paused, let his eyes fall, and saw his purse. Without hesitation he stooped and recovered his property. At the same time, the policeman's hand, grasped his shoulder.

"Hello!" cried Officer 7301. "What's going on here? Found a purse, eh?"

"That's all right," replied Pringle. "It's my purse, and I'm going to keep it."

Officer 7301, overhauled Pringle visually and shook his head. It was a nervy attempt, but rather thin work.

"What are you giving me?" he sharply questioned. "I saw you coming—way off—from the other street. You weren't hunting anything. You haven't passed here before since I've been on post."

"All the same," asserted Pringle, "it's my purse."

Here the wayfarer came out from under the awning to refute Pringle, with testimony less than mere veracities. He couldn't stand seeing a crook get away with that purse. Never!

"See here, officer," at last said Pringle, "if I tell you exactly what is in the purse, will that settle it?"

"Well—maybe so," he replied.

"Only a plug of tobacco," informed Pringle. "The old leather case keeps it moist—just as I like it. Had the purse now for a good many years."

He opened the purse to prove the truth of his statement.

Officer 7301 glanced in the purse and nodded. The wayfarer also saw and cursed his own particular brand of foolishness in jeopardizing the chance of a good job. He scuttered away. That left only Pringle. He began again where the thing started. He sought his penknife and sliced the tobacco for use in the usual habit. He moved on a few paces, then halted to re-examine the purse, for in returning it to his pocket his fingers had clasped a small hard object jammed tightly in one corner. Presently he extracted it. The object was rolled in soft paper. He removed the paper, and his face became suddenly exuberant. In his hand lay a crystal scintillating many fires.

"Well—I'll be hanged—if I'm not in considerable luck!" he ejaculated. "So here's where I put the diamond that came out of Maria's ring. Could have sworn I slipped it in my other purse. Been hunting for it everywhere. Pretty fuss she'd have made had it been a total loss. Guess I'm in two hundred dollars."

**Tomb of Patriarchs Has Long Been Holy Place**

The interior of the cave of Machpelah in southern Palestine, where are the tombs of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah, was photographed for the first time in a long time. This burial ground of the old Bible patriarchs, says the London Graphic, is the most famous in the world. Its authenticity has never been questioned. The Jews kept it as a holy place throughout the ages. The Christians venerated it also; and when the Mohammedans conquered Palestine they in turn preserved the spot as sacred.

In the Eleventh century the Crusaders built a castlelike church over the cave, and the Turks turned it into a mosque, which is still standing. The Moslems regard the cave as a holy place. Before the war the Christians who were permitted to enter it could be counted on the fingers of your hands. One of the last to enter was the late King Edward when he visited the Holy Land as prince of Wales.

The late Prince of Wales' sepulchre are marked by monumental tombs in separate chapels. Entrance is gained to those of Abraham and Sarah through silver gates. Abraham's tomb consists of a complete structure built up of plastered stone or marble and covered with three green carpets embroidered with gold. They are said to have been presented by Mohammed II, Sultan of the late Abdul-Melid. The shrine of Sarah the photographer of the Graphic was not allowed to enter because it was a woman's.

**After Forty Years**

William Allen, a soldier, who was severely wounded in the head at the Battle of Marston, after recovering from his wound, had the machinery of his brain so badly damaged that he was left as a mere automaton. He was so far as current events were concerned, he retained a vivid memory of the incidents of his life up to the unlucky day, and could describe incidents—men and trivial incidents of his youth with remarkable fidelity. On July 22, 1896, he was thrown from a horse and killed. After covering his eyes with his hands, he found that his memory was completely restored.



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READY TO DO BUSINESS

## COWLES SETTLEMENT

Samuel Charles is moving from the farm known as the Volney Vincent farm to B. F. Craw's farm in Kenyon Hollow.

Raymond Hike is moving from Wm. Burt's farm to the farm vacated by Charles Hike.

Mr. and Mrs. Claude Miller and daughter of Onelda, Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Miller of Canastota, and Mrs. George Neal and daughter were guests at C. F. Rose's on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Wagner were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Newman of Keeney.

Mrs. George Neal, son and daughter were recent guests of Rev. and Mrs. I. M. Owen and family of Smith Mills. A unanimous vote was given Mr. Owen to remain on this charge another year which is his seventh year at that place.

F. L. Keeler and son filled their silo yesterday.

Miss Mary Case of Cuyler began teaching in this district on September 14th.

Mr. and Mrs. Owen Case, son Claude, and Miss Irene Graham of Syracuse, Emory Page and Arvine Keeler were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Keeler on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Halley Keeler were